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S.B. No. 1195 (raised) An Act concerning school finance reform

Good afternoon chairs, and distinguished members of the Appropriations committee.

I am here today to testify on behalf of my ten-year-old daughter, Arianna. Arianna attends Amistad Academy Middle school in New Haven, CT. And also, on behalf of my daughter Yasmin who attends the Early Learning Center @ Gateway community college.

Arianna is a very bright student and unfortunately very easily distracted. She began her education at Truman school. I managed to get her enrolled into Magnet school and had her transferred to Barnard Environmental Science magnet school. She was there for two years and with no improvement in her grades or her behavior.

My husband and I were extremely excited when we were informed that she was accepted into Amistad Academy. This is her first year there and already she has moved up five reading levels and she is on the Honor roll for the second time this school year. I am extremely proud of my daughter's accomplishments with the help of the wonderful teachers at Amistad.

Not only have I seen an improvement in her grades but also, she as a student feels a lot more comfortable in her setting. The structure that the school gives the students and the stability is highly commendable.

My youngest daughter currently is in her final year @ The Early Learning Center @ Gateway. Her experience has been amazing. The teachers and staff @ Gateway are held to very high expectations and they fulfill them. Yasmin loves to learn and has a fire ignited in her that I hope will only continue to grow. My husband & I were recently informed that she has been accepted to Amistad and she will commence kindergarten in the fall.

I ask that you please consider the lives of the students that currently attend the schools. They are our future and deserve to get the best education possible. I understand that spending needs to be cut with such a large deficit, but I urge you to please be considerate to not only the students, the teachers.

The teachers at Amistad Academy and at the Early Learning Center @ Gateway have helped my children flourish; they have been allowed to be different and unique.